

# Sydney, Commercial Metropolis of New Commonwealth

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**S**YDNEY, Australia, April 29.—Keep your eye on Sydney! It is the growing city of New Australia, destined to be the commercial metropolis of this part of the world. It has now about 450,000 population and almost twice as much business as any town of the same size in the United States. Situated in about the same latitude as Louisiana, it lies in the center of the most populous part of the continent, just where goods can most easily come in for distribution over the vast territory. It is the capital of New South Wales, a state as big as Texas and Indiana combined, which has sheep and pasture lands as large as New York. New South Wales has a population of 1,200,000, and Sydney supplies them. These 1,200,000 are among the richest people of this continent, who are the richest people of the globe.

We pride ourselves on having money to burn. The Australians make more on the average than we do, and their living expenses are higher than ours. They are by far the richest people of the world, according to Mulhall's statistics. About ten years ago their average wealth was estimated at \$1,620 per person, or, at five to the family, at \$8,100 per family.

Many of them are very rich. I know one man who has a million acres in land and you can hardly throw a stone in the business part of Sydney without striking one who does not own 5,000 acres and upward. There are men here who own a million sheep, and many who have flocks of tens of thousands.

You see the signs of wealth on the



IN THE WONDERFUL HARBOR OF SYDNEY

streets you see many awnings of galvanized iron and glass extending out over the sidewalks to shade them.

#### Miles of Wood Pavements.

Sydney covers a vast area. Its streets wind about like those of Boston, and it is facetiously said that the place was originally laid out by a bullock driver with a boomerang. Sydney is noted for its excellent wooden pavements. Consul Bell, who has made a study of the subject, says the pavements are better than those of any other city and that they are so well constructed that they last for ten years without need of repair. George street, upon which some of the chief business houses are located, recently took up a part of its pavements after eleven years' rough usage. The blocks were as good as when laid, save that they had been worn down about one-fourth of an inch. These blocks are of eucalyptus wood dipped in boiling tar and laid on a foundation of cement. They are fitted as closely as wood carpeting and they are so smooth that three tons can be hauled over them by one horse, and loads of six tons for two horses and ten tons for four horses are not uncommon. I am told that 10,000,000 pounds of wool go over this street every year. It has 140 large busses, each carrying from sixteen to forty persons, which are always traveling upon it, and, notwithstanding this, the wearing down is less than one-thirtieth of an inch per year. The wood has proven so good that similar blocks are being shipped to London and other English cities for the streets there.

#### Walk Through the City.

Let us take a walk through Sydney. The sun is hot, but the iron and glass awnings furnish protection, and we stroll by great stores with well displayed windows. You can buy almost anything here you can buy in New York, and the prices are equally low. The goods are marked in pounds, shillings and pence, the shilling and penny taking the place of the dollar and cent. There are fine jewelry stores, photograph shops and art stores.

Sydney has big insurance buildings, bank buildings, excellent clubs and many hotels. The two largest hotels are the Australia and the Metropole, which are a cross between the good American and good European hotels. The prices are about the same as in the United States, though at first they seem cheaper, the extras making up the difference. There are small hotels in every block, but the most of these are mere saloons or public houses, with a room or so for rent to conform with the law providing that liquor shall be sold only at hotels.

One feature of the city is the numerous arcades which are cut through from one street to another. These are celled with glass, paved with tiles and decorated with tropical plants and flowers. They are lighted at night with great arc lights, which hang down from the stores which wall them. They are also delightful quarters in which to shop during the heat of the day.

#### Fine Public Buildings.

I have written of the public buildings of Victoria. Sydney has some equally fine and in some respects finer. Take the Sydney town hall, which is said to be the biggest building of its kind in the world, the next largest being that of Preston, England. It is a magnificent stone structure, situated in the heart of the city, containing an amusement hall which will seat 5,000 people and an organ which surpasses that of Melbourne. Until this was bought the Melbourne organ was the biggest of the

it the other Sunday. There were husbands and wives taking their little ones out for an airing, young fellows with their sweethearts, old men with their daughters and boys and girls walking to and fro or listening to the preachers and healers.

I stopped for a time in each crowd. The first was gathered about a lightning calculator, who talked a blue streak as his hand danced over a blackboard, stopping only at intervals to sell books showing you how to learn the higher mathematics in three lessons.

The next speaker was a temperance orator; he was denouncing the rich men and officials of the city and giving side slaps at the saloons, and the next was a socialist, who advocated taxing the rich and a general division of property.

One of the best drawing cards was a negro, who was preaching the end of the world in a marked Yankee accent, and another was a Salvation Army band, led by a sweet-singing woman with a skin like a baby.

#### Sees the Good Samaritan.

About fifty feet from this crowd I saw a walking hospital, overseen by a woman called "the Good Samaritan." The old woman had thirteen invalids, each of whom was afflicted with some terrible disease. They were of all ages, from babies to three-score and ten—some lame, some halt and some blind. They sat upon in chairs on the grass while the Good Samaritan in their midst showed their sores and diseases to the crowd and begged money for their support. She had a carpet laid at her feet and upon this the charitably inclined cast their pennies and sixpences from time to time.



SYDNEY TOWN HALL—THE LARGEST IN THE WORLD.

streets. There are no patched clothes and no sunbonnets. The average workingman is better clad than his brother of the United States. Many of the women wear tailor-made gowns and the clerks all have creased pantaloons.

#### Big Cities Below the Line.

I have been in all the big cities south of the equator and I like Sydney best. Buenos Ayres is the largest; it has 800,000 people, but it is a succotash of Italian, Portuguese and Spanish ingredients, with a mixture of Indian, English, German and French. Rio de Janeiro has 600,000 inhabitants, so much sprinkled with African blood that you can't tell where the white ends and the black begins. The other cities of South America are streaked with Indian blood and the majority of the people are very, very poor.

The Australians are Anglo-Saxons of the Anglo-Saxons. The crowds on a Sydney street are like those of Chicago or New York save that the German, Swedish and Italian faces are absent. Here the faces are all English, Irish and Scotch, or, what is better, pure Australian. The Australians are finer looking than the people of Great Britain. They are taller, straighter and better formed. Six feet is not an uncommon height for either men or women. The latter are Amazons, and owing to the climate and their sedentary life they are raw-boned and ungainly. Many of them are slender, and they tower above you like so many giantesses. They are called "cornstalks," because they spring up so rapidly and grow so tall.

This population and Sydney's magnificent harbor has made it the New York of Australia. The city does business with all the world. It is the terminus of a dozen great steamship lines connecting the continent with Europe, Asia, Africa and North and South America. There are ships in the harbor from Cape Town, ships from China and Japan, big 10,000-ton steamers from Germany, fast vessels from France, and a half dozen lines from England. There are coasting ships which call at the different cities of this continent and which connect it with all the islands of the south seas.

Commerce here is enormous. The wool shipments alone have a value something like \$40,000,000 a year, and there is a large export of grain, coal and manufactured goods. The imports are very heavy, considering the population. New South Wales, all told, has not more people than Philadelphia, but it buys \$150,000,000 worth of goods annually from foreign countries, and this comes in through Sydney.

I wish I could show you the Sydney har-

bor. There is nothing like it in the world in beauty and commercial advantages. Its entrance is not over a mile wide, with great rocks rising up on each side of it to about three-fifths the height of the Washington monument, forming a natural gateway. No matter how stormy the ocean is outside, when you pass through this gate you find quiet waters. You enter a winding lake or stream, with hundreds of bays, inlets or creeks, with islands which seem to float, and with wooded hills which in places rise straight up from the shore. The water is so deep that the biggest ocean steamers can sail right up to the land, and the coast line is so great that all the ships of all the world could anchor here and have room to spare. The harbor proper has an area of nine square miles. One of its arms contains three square miles, while the good anchorages within ten miles of the city postoffice are numbered by so many hundred miles that I do not dare to mention the exact figures. Sydney lies on both sides of this harbor. The ships come right into the town, so that you can step off, walk three minutes and be in the chief business section.

The natural beauty of the harbor is as great as that of any harbor of the world. It is as beautiful as the bay of Naples, as the harbor of Rio de Janeiro or as the famous waters about Constantinople on the Bosphorus. At one side of it are the botanical gardens, a park filled with all sorts of Australian and semi-tropical trees. The governor's palace, a castle-like structure of rose-colored stucco, is on one edge of the garden, and further back is another great park, known as the Domain, the playground of Sydney, corresponding to Central park in New York or Hyde park in London.

During my stay in Sydney I have climbed to the top of the public works building for a bird's-eye view of the city. This building is right on the harbor, in almost the center of the town. Standing upon it you can see the great ocean steamers landing goods at the quays, the ships coming in and starting out to various ports, and the little tugs and ferries darting this way and that. You can look over the city. Its buildings are as ragged as those of the United States in cities of similar size. They cut the skyline like the teeth of a broken saw, one now and then running up for many stories above the others, although there are no skyscrapers with frameworks of steel. The most of the buildings are of less than six stories. Nearly all are built of yellow sandstone taken out from the quarries beneath the city itself. In the business



SCENE ON GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY.

world. Sydney was, of course, bound to beat Melbourne, and it has now the largest organ ever made. It is eighty feet wide and thirty feet deep and cost \$85,000. It has 8,756 pipes. Some are of wood sixty-four feet long and others vary in length from the height of a three-story house to that of a pin.

Associated with the town hall is the Centennial hall. Other magnificent structures are the public works office, the offices of the secretaries of the colony and the markets. The Sydney markets cover several acres and they are very complete in their arrangement. Connected with them is a hotel, a concert hall and a photograph gallery. They cost altogether \$3,500,000.

The Sydney postoffice was built of the freestone from under the city. It covers half a square and has a ground floor of about two acres. It contains the postoffice, the postal savings bank and the general telegraph and telephone offices, all of which are run by the government. The mail clerks wear uniforms of bright red and you see red-coated men delivering letters and driving the mail wagons to the trains.

Sydney is noted for its extensive park system. It has as good lungs as any city of Europe. Moore park contains 500 acres, Centennial park 768 acres and there are also cricket grounds, the racecourses and the fair grounds. Quite a space is given up to the zoological gardens, to the botanical gardens and there are many little pleasure grounds on the islands.

The most interesting park in Australia is the Domain in Sydney. This contains more than 100 acres and it is right in the heart of the city. It has magnificent trees, velvety lawns and walks and drives of every description. The Domain is accessible to all, there are no signs to keep off the grass and little ones and grown-ups roll and stroll upon it.

#### Free Speech for Everyone.

Every Sunday afternoon the Domain is crowded and it then becomes the parliament of the people. Anyone who wishes to preach or pray has a right to erect his pulpit on the grass and toot for hearers. No one questions his doctrines and he says what he pleases. There are at least a score or more of such speakers on the Domain every Sunday, each with his own crowd about him. There are lightning calculators, labor agitators and socialists, preachers of every doctrine and every creed, phrenologists and beggars, faith healers and all other cranks.

The crowd is a good-natured one, made up of all classes, with working people in the majority. There were, I judge, at least 25,000 persons in the Domain when I visited

Nearby was a blind man with a cracked voice and a fiddle, who sang and sawed for money, and further over an orator who was denouncing the trusts of America, which were, he said, enslaving the Yankee laboring men and which would in time probably come over to Australia to place the yoke of bondage on them.

Leaving the Domain I walked back to my hotel, noticing the queer signs by the way. One was "Lollies." It was over the door of a confectioner's store and as I looked in I saw all sorts of candies displayed. "Lollies" is the popular word here for candies, and between the acts at the theaters boys go about through the audience, calling out, "Lollies, ladies! Lollies, gents! Does anyone want a box of fine fresh lollies?"

Another sign, of which I saw a half dozen in one block, was "Artificial teeth for sale." The Australians are noted for their bad teeth and the dentists do a thriving business. It seems that buying or pawing teeth is common and that second-hand teeth are sold like second-hand books.

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